

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

Please cancel claims 26-29 without prejudice.

Please add new claims 34-36 as presented below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended): A multipole overvoltage protection system for a multiphase power supply system, the multipole overvoltage protection system comprising:

- a first overvoltage protection element connected in a first leg of the power supply system;
- a second overvoltage protection element connected in a second leg of the power supply system, ~~the second overvoltage protection element being coupled to the first overvoltage protection element so that the second overvoltage protection element ignites when the first overvoltage protection element ignites and the first overvoltage protection element ignites when the second overvoltage protection element ignites;~~

- a first ignition aid associated with the first overvoltage protection element; and
- a second ignition aid associated with the second overvoltage protection element, the first and second ignition aids being ~~coupled~~ connected to each other via an ignition connection;
wherein, upon an ignition of the first ignition aid, the first ignition aid is configured to cause the second ignition aid to ignite via the ignition connection.

Claim 16 (canceled)

Claim 17 (currently amended): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 15 further comprising a central ignition aid circuit connected to the first and second overvoltage protection elements.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 15 wherein the first and second overvoltage protection elements are disposed in a common housing.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 15 wherein:

the first overvoltage protection element includes a first and a second electrode with a first air breakdown spark gap therebetween; and

the second overvoltage protection element includes a third and a fourth electrode with a second air breakdown spark gap therebetween;

~~wherein the first, second, third and fourth electrodes are disposed so that the second air breakdown spark gap ignites when the first air breakdown spark gap ignites and the first air breakdown spark gap ignites when the second air breakdown spark gap ignites due to a presence of a plasma.~~

Claim 20 (previously presented): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 15 wherein:

the first ignition aid includes a first ignition electrode and a first ignition circuit connected to the first ignition electrode; and

the second ignition aid includes a second ignition electrode and a second ignition circuit connected to the second ignition electrode.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 17 wherein;

the first ignition aid includes a first ignition electrode;

the second ignition aid includes a second ignition electrode; and

the central ignition aid circuit includes a first and a second ignition electrode and a central ignition circuit is connected to the first and second ignition electrodes, the first ignition electrode cooperating with the first overvoltage protection element and the second ignition electrode cooperating with the second overvoltage protection element.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 19 wherein the first and second electrodes are disposed coaxially with respect to each other and the third and fourth electrodes are disposed coaxially with respect to each other.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim ~~22~~ 19 further comprising a wherein the first ignition electrode disposed coaxially with respect to the first and second electrodes and a aid is configured to ignite the first air breakdown spark gap, and the second ignition electrode disposed coaxially with respect to the third and fourth electrodes aid is configured to ignite the second air breakdown spark gap.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 22 wherein the first, second, third and fourth electrodes each have a respective varying cross-section over a length of the respective electrode.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 24 wherein the first and second ignition electrode each have a respective varying cross-section over a length of the respective electrode.

Claim 26 (canceled)

the first overvoltage protection element includes a first air breakdown spark gap; and
the second overvoltage protection element includes a second air breakdown spark gap;
~~wherein the first and second air breakdown spark gaps are disposed in a common housing so
that a first plasma produced upon an igniting of the first air breakdown spark gap ignites the second
air breakdown spark gap and a second plasma produced upon an igniting of the second air
breakdown spark gap ignites the first air breakdown spark gap.~~

Claim 34 (new): A multipole overvoltage protection system for a multiphase power supply system, the multipole overvoltage protection system comprising:

- a first overvoltage protection element connected in a first leg of the power supply system;
- a second overvoltage protection element connected in a second leg of the power supply system;
- a first ignition electrode configured to ignite the first overvoltage protection element;
- a second ignition electrode configured to ignite the second overvoltage protection element;
- and
- a central ignition circuit connected to the first and second ignition electrodes via respective first and second ignition connections and configured, upon an ignition of the first ignition electrode, to ignite the second ignition electrode via the second ignition connection.

Claim 35 (new): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 34 wherein:

- the first overvoltage protection element includes a first and a second electrode with a first air breakdown spark gap therebetween; and
- the second overvoltage protection element includes a third and a fourth electrode with a second air breakdown spark gap therebetween.

Claim 36 (new): The overvoltage protection system as recited in claim 34 wherein the central ignition circuit is configured to ignite the first ignition electrode.